

About the RPCU

The Regroupement provincial des comités des usagers (RPCU), brings together the majority of Quebec's Users and In-patients' committees. It provides committee members with support, on a daily basis, and training so they may better perform their duties as prescribed by law. Moreover, the RPCU defends the rights of seniors and youth, and is committed to combating abuse and intimidation. For more information, visit the following websites: www.rpcu.qc.ca and www.maltraitanceaines.org.

Santé
et Services sociaux
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Auto-Psy (Région de Québec)
Groupe d'action communautaire autonome
de promotion et de défense individuelle et
collective des droits en santé mentale

Regroupement provincial
des comités des usagers
Santé et services sociaux



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Who is a user?

Users of the Health and Social Services Network are not only those people who are ill. In fact, each of us was born a user, and we will all die as users. Users include everyone who, at any moment in their lives, use the services of the network. This includes pregnant women, newborn babies, teenagers in youth centres, people who want to quit smoking, people who are disabled physically or mentally challenged, workers who have stopped working, people living with cancer, the elderly who live at home and who receive support services from their CLSC or from close relatives. In other words, all Quebecers are users.

What is Users' Rights' Week?

The Users' Rights' Week (*Semaine des droits des usagers du réseau de la santé et des services sociaux*) is organised each year by the RPCU together with the Users and In-patients' committees. It aims at informing users of their rights and highlighting the work carried out within Quebec's health and social services institutions.

What are the users' rights?

"The raison d'être for services is the person who requires them." This is one of the guidelines on which the *Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services (LSSSS)* is based. The users' rights are:

1. The right to information;
2. The right to services;
3. The right to choose his or her own healthcare professional or institution;
4. The right to receive the care required by one's condition;
5. The right to either consent to, or refuse, care;
6. The right to participate in decisions;
7. The right to be accompanied, assisted and represented;
8. The right to be housed;
9. The right to receive services in English;
10. The right to access one's user file;
11. The right to the confidentiality of one's user file;
12. The right to lodge a complaint.

The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Civil Code of Quebec also offer some protection.

Dissatisfied with services?

An opportunity
to *improve*
them!

Health and Social Services



The right to lodge a complaint

Health and
Social Services
Network

Users'
Rights
Week

Obtain information from your Users' or In-patients' committee / www.rpcu.qc.ca/week



Facebook pages to discover,
love and share

Seniors await your visit!

www.facebook.com/visitonosaines

Young people want to share stories with us!

www.facebook.com/ecoutonsnosjeunes

Dissatisfied with services?

An opportunity
to *improve* them!

Most of the time, users are satisfied with the care and services they receive in the Health and Social Services' institutions. Employees and administrators are persons who care about the quality of services and the well-being of users.

At times, however, a deficiency in the organisation of services can happen: care is not given correctly, or users' rights are not respected. If a user finds him or herself in such a situation, it is possibly happening to other users as well.

When informed of problematic situations in which users find themselves, the institution's management and persons responsible for services must take corrective action to remedy these situations. The primary objective is to **improve** the **quality** of care and services.

Therefore, indicating dissatisfaction is an excellent **way** to improve the quality of care and services. It is a **useful** contribution, both for the individual user himself, and for all of the users at their care facility.



Improving services First, let's talk!

Is the difficult situation in which a user finds him or herself, due to a misunderstanding? Or a simple mistake? Could it be remedied without having to lodge a complaint? The answer is YES.

First of all, the user must contact the right person within the care facility: the person who is responsible for care and services. The user must give them the facts, clarify the situation and ask for an explanation. Communication, exchange and dialogue with the right person will, more often than not, solve the problem. Simply reporting a problem can be sufficient. However, sometimes it is necessary to go beyond reporting.

Lodging a complaint Drawing upon the user's experience!

When a problematic situation cannot be solved easily, or if you are still not satisfied, the Act respecting Health Services and Social Services provides a **mechanism** through which a user can state his or her view, be heard, understood, and respected: The Complaints Review Process¹, whose aim is to improve the **quality** of services being offered. In other words, the continuous improvement in the quality of services is based on taking into account the **user's experience**.

In the Health and Social Services network, lodging a complaint is a legal right. A mechanism has been put in place: the Complaints Review Process. It is used to improve the quality of services.

¹The lodging of a complaint to the bodies authorized to receive them, depends on the nature of the wrongdoing (malpractice, breach of users' rights, breach of the institution, criminal act or violation of human rights), various legislative steps and service agreements. The Complaint Review Process is complex, but it is usually the Service Quality and Complaints Commissioner of the institution who receives the complaints. The Users' committee of the institution may direct the user to the relevant authorities or relevant resources, and accompany him during the process.



Who does one go to in order to lodge a complaint?

In each institution, a Service Quality and Complaints **Commissioner** is appointed to receive complaints and respond to them within 45 days. This is a requirement under the law.

Possibility of a second recourse?

In the event that the user is not satisfied with the response given by the institution or with the measures put in place to resolve the situation, he or she can apply to the **Quebec Ombudsperson**.

Afraid to talk about it...

Persons wishing to report a situation or lodge a complaint may fear to be adversely affected. In order to help a user who fears retaliation, one must create a climate of confidence allowing them to assert their rights.



Users' Committee Support and Assistance

The Users' committee, composed of volunteer users, aims at actively contributing to improving the quality of services offered by the institution, promoting the rights of users and supporting all users who take effective measures to voice their dissatisfaction or lodge a complaint.

By supporting a user, listening to them or assisting them in this way, the Users' committee contributes to improving the quality of services for all the users within the institution.

Moreover, the Users' committee will be better able to identify priority issues to be debated with the institution's Board of Directors.

Important to remember The User plays a key role in improving the quality of services!

Improving the quality of care and services is a **constructive** exercise. Users are key players: By reporting problem situations and denouncing abuses to the person in charge of services, the Complaints Commissioner or the Ombudsman, they significantly increase the value of the public health and social services system within their institution (Hospital, CHSLD, Youth centre, Rehabilitation and mental health).

Find out more

Users' rights
www.rpcu.qc.ca/rights

The Health and Social Services Network Complaint Examination System
www.sante.gouv.qc.ca/systeme-sante-en-bref/plaintes

Quebec Ombudsperson
www.protecteurducitoyen.qc.ca/en